



**MINUTES
TREE ADVISORY BOARD
Via Zoom
TUESDAY, MAY 11, 2021
4:00pm**

Members Present: Nancy Moore, Council Chair
Ann Williams, Council Member
Nate Smith, Citizen Member
Tim Kalan, Citizen Member
George Eaton, Citizen Member
Ted Auch, Citizen Member
Reid Coffman, Citizen Member
Charles Orłowski, Superintendent of Forestry
Patricia Speese, Director of Public Works

Also Present: Kelly Baker, Administrative Coordinator, Public Works
John Barber, Friends of Lower Lake
Laura Marks, Heights Tree People
Bill Hanavan, Heights Tree People

CALL TO ORDER – 4:02pm
Nancy Moore, Council Chair

HEIGHTS TREE PEOPLE PRESENTATION

Laura Marks and Bill Hanavan

Council Chair Moore thanked the Heights Tree People (HTP) for their collaboration with the Southerly Tree Planting. Mr. Hanavan discussed the mission of the HTP and how they are just a small club of seven. He stated that they mostly plant in Cleveland Heights and had planted 277 trees last year. They wanted to expand to Shaker Heights where they only planted 13 trees last year and thought they could do better. He spoke of the leg work involved in each resident's tree planting including site visits and education. With Shaker's active network they had a great response and they received over 200 requests. They struggled to keep up and have decided that they need to put a hold on the program until the fall.

Mr. Hanavan stated that HTP have spoken with Holden Arboretum and Wester Reserve and they are on the same page about planting in people's front yards in terms of restoring the canopy. What HTP is looking for are volunteers to do the site work in Shaker.

Ms. Marks talked about the work HTP did on East 130th, in Cleveland, on the tree lawns. Council Chair Moore asked if they would talk about the trees they planted all over the City of Shaker vs on one street like E.130th. Ms. Marks stated that she felt it went very well and residents were grateful and courteous. She

stated it was very time consuming. They planted 71 trees in Shaker in the spring and for the last month they have turned people away stating they are not taking requests at this time. Ms. Marks mentioned that the wording in the Shaker Life article made the residents think that there may be grant money or federal money to support their program and some inquired about how this program was funded. When she explained that it is privately funded, some offered a donation.

Council Chair Moore suggested that in the fall they articulate the program slightly differently. She stated they would take two streets in areas that have diminished tree canopy specifically Moreland, Ludlow and the southwest corner of the Shaker and let HTP determine how many trees get planted in the fall for free. Council Chair Moore suggested that they collect a fee for materials to be collected at time of consultation for the program next spring. Ms. Marks stated that she would prefer not to talk about spring 2022 at this time and would prefer not to commit to a spring planting. She also stated that HTP prides themselves that they plant trees for free, meaning they would not want money to be a barrier.

Council Chair Moore asked if there were any questions, suggestions or reactions. Citizen Member Smith stated the he wanted to help with the consultation process and to keep the trees free of charge. Citizen Member Kalan stated that there doesn't need to be a charge, but they could explain the program and if they are willing to make a donation that would be acceptable. Ms. Marks stated that she spoke with a resident who is a professor and who has students who are always looking for intern projects.

APPROVAL OF MARCH 9, 2021 MEETING MINUTES

Nancy Moore, Council Chair

Council Chair Moore asked if there were any questions, changes or additions to the March 9, 2021, minutes other than the date that needed to be corrected from February to March. There were none, a motion was made by Citizen Member Kalan, it was seconded and the motion was approved after the date change.

TREE ASSESSMENT PRESENTATION

Patricia Speese, Director of Public Works

Director Speese showed a PowerPoint presentation of the Tree Assessment Recommendation 2022 through 2024. She spoke of how the city was the gold standard throughout the state of Ohio and due to various reasons that is starting to dwindle. She stated it is her job to bring to council and the mayor the needs of the city. Director Speese showed that after 21 years of the same funding for the tree assessment it is no longer good enough. It does not meet the expectation of the residents or city standards.

Director Speese stating that the assessment is based on the property front footage. A resident with a front footage of 50 feet is currently charged \$1.16 per foot and pays that bi-yearly. The major components of the assessment are the purchasing of trees for tree lawns and center strips, maintenance of the existing urban forest, and the personnel needs to meet the goals and objectives. She stated the tree removals that they do in the city have outpaced the replacement of trees by over 10%. Per the County's 2019 Urban Tree Canopy Assessment, Shaker Heights lost 11% tree canopy. She continued to show the conflicts mentioning the utilities that are repairing their 100 year infrastructure along with the increased amount and intensity of storms that there have been in recent years. She stated with sustainability and storm water management we need to plant more trees to look toward a sustainable future.

Director Speese went over the needs of the forestry department to keep up with the 110 line miles of tree lined roadways. The best practice for pruning newly planted trees is every two and four years and to meet that goal they would have to prune 22 lines miles per year. They currently are pruning, at most, 12 miles per year making it a 10 year cycle to get through the city which causes weaker trees and with these kinds

of storms, they do not hold up. To meet the goal of 22 lane miles a year an additional cost of \$100-125 thousand dollars is needed. She stated that the Forestry department used to be the second largest department in Public Works and it is currently the smallest. There were at least eight employees and currently are at three.

Some changes that have happened, Director Speese stated are climate change, which has had a tremendous impact on the trees, but also the sewers and even how we address snow and ice removal. These storms are more frequent than in years past and are decimating our trees. She mentioned the impact of COVID on the availability of trees and how that has been a challenge along with the deer damage on the newly planted young trees causing the department to include deer guards when planting new trees. All of these items have driven up the cost of maintaining our canopy.

Director Speese went over the history of revenue for the forestry department stating back in 2008 there was \$798,636 in revenue and are now it is down to \$745,000 a year for two main reasons. She explained the city has demolished and taken over 225 additional vacant lots that Public Works maintains and are now taken out of the tax cycle. Also, there have been significant tax foreclosures on delinquencies. It adds up to approximately a \$50,000 reduction on the revenue.

The needs of the department today as described by Director Speese will require a larger increase the first year and then every three years a minimal increase. To maintain and plant 150 more trees each year they will need \$50,000 more and to add two additional employees they need approximately \$150,000, plus funds for additional pruning to meet their 5 year cycle goal. Also, every year they will set aside \$25,000 for equipment and keep those funds for when equipment is needed. Director Speese stated that the city received \$50,000 from the County Healthy Urban Tree Canopy Grant and that they will always be looking at ways to obtain grant funding.

Director Speese stated the last two increases in the Tree Assessment were in 1998 and it was raised to \$1.01 and in 2001 it was raised to \$1.16 and there have been no increases since then. They are proposing to increase the assessment by \$0.50 per foot raising it from \$1.16 to \$1.66 per foot to obtain the additional revenue needed of \$325,000.

Council Chair Moore asked if there were any questions or comments. Citizen Member Kalan stated he thought it was fantastic. Citizen Member Eaton asked if they used to have seven employees why they are only asking for five. Director Speese stated at this point and time this is what we need and we outsource more work than we did back then. If they decided by the next assessment another staff member was needed then a small increase would be suggested at that time. Citizen Member Coffman expressed thanks and stated that he had wondered how the city would recover the losses and appreciated a strategy to complete that going forward. He asked if once the assessment was passed by council and moved to the county if the county also had to vote. Director Speese stated that it just needed to pass through City Council. Council Chair Moore stated that she believes council is very supportive of this assessment.

Council Chair Moore asked if there were any further questions, there were none, a motion was made by Citizen Member Coffman, it was seconded and the motion was approved to move to the Sustainability Committee.

Via Email from Ted Auch, Citizen Member 5/20/21

Hello, I would first like to say that I very much appreciate the work Patti, Chuck, and company must do with extraordinarily little thanks and limited resources. I wholeheartedly support an increase in

the tree assessment, but I would be remiss if I did not make the following points and I would like to request that these comments be added to the record as I was not able to make them at the time today because I was occupied with kids when Patti opened for Q&A:

1. As the street tree assessment currently stands it is regressive assessing based on frontage rather than what it seems it should be based on which is frontage in concert with house value and/or some measure of mean annual income. We are forcing those that have less to pay more of what they have into this project which leads me into my second point.

2. It is clear from the "haves" vs the "have not" neighborhoods in Shaker Heights that there is a huge amount of unrealized revenue in the form of plant material placed on tree lawns around town with volumes increasing in parallel with house value and/or acreage. I would suggest another way we consider increasing urban forestry revenues is to start to discuss pro rating assessments based on the amount of material placed on tree lawns so that property owners are being charged by the pound rather than flat fees.

FORESTER'S REPORT

Charles Orłowski, Superintendent of Forestry

Forester Orłowski spoke about the April storm taking 12-13 trees. He stated the crews are up to eight miles of pruning this year working toward nine. They are ahead of the Dominion projects, meaning they got the streets pruned before they began work. Forester Orłowski mentioned the tree planting contractor has planted over 200 trees so far and they think they will do the remaining 55 trees by the end of the week. That will just leave the remainder for the fall, along with the 143 trees from the grant to be planted along Van Aken.

Forester Orłowski stated that the City received \$50,000 from the Healthy Urban Tree Grant from the County. The application was originally for \$76,000 but unfortunately they could not fund that amount. He stated that they were going to plant more trees on Onaway but will focus on Van Aken. The contractor will begin this fall and should have everything in before the end of the season. Forester Orłowski stated he had to search around several nurseries to find all the trees.

He also mentioned that we did not get the BOA Arbor Day Grant, but stated they will keep trying.

ONAWAY PARK PROJECT

Nate Smith, Citizen Member

Citizen Member Smith mentioned thanks to all the people who have helped get the Onaway Park Project started including Citizen Member Coffman for his design. He stated there will be a fourth community zoom meeting on May 27th and after that they are looking expand to a larger neighborhood meeting and hope to start in the fall on the project. He mentioned he understands the process but wishes it wasn't so hard to plant trees in the city.

Council Member Williams stated she agrees with just wanting to plant trees but believes the process is very important as well as the community engagement. She stated that sometimes that process can shift from the original vision but this is democracy and she is a big supporter of public process. Forester Orłowski stated that this is new process and then next time it will go smoother.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Nancy Moore, Council Chair

Arbor Day

Council Chair Moore stated the Arbor Day Scavenger Hunt collaboration with Margaret Simon from the Shaker Heights Library was a success and saved our Arbor Day celebration.

Tree News

Council Chair Moore stated that she had completed the Spring Tree News and it was with Communications and Marketing to approve the final draft.

Council Chair Moore stated that at the next meeting, August 10, 2021 she will have the Heritage Tree Nominations for review and the recommendations for the ordinance and mission statement for review.

Forester Orlowski asked that if anyone wanted to volunteer to help locate areas to plant more trees with him.

Tree Advisory Board 2021 Meetings

March 9, 2021

April 6, 2021-CANCELLED

May 11, 2021

August 10, 2021

November 9, 2021

Meeting adjourned at 5:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Handwritten signature of Nancy Moore in cursive script, with the letters 'KAB' written at the end of the signature.

Nancy Moore, Council Chairperson
Tree Advisory Board

FORESTRY ANNUAL REPORT

2021

MONTH	DBH	CLEARANCE PRUNE	DEAD WOOD	STORM DAMAGE	COMPLETE TRIM	VEHICLE DAMAGE	BARK TRACE	TREE STAKE	TREE STAKE REM	YOUNG TREE TRIM	ELM SAMPLES	D.E.D. PRUNE	STUMPS GROUND	TREE REMOVALS	BRANCHES ONSTRUCTING	HORNET/WASP NEST	WORK ORDERS
JANUARY	1713	7	17	7	56	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	34
FEBRUARY	3199	5	0	2	98	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	4
MARCH	3603	1	0	3	447	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	0	0	11
APRIL	884	3	0	21	222	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	71	9	0	0	66
MAY	89	4	0	2	78	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
JUNE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
JULY	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AUGUST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEPTEMBER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
OCTOBER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NOVEMBER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DECEMBER	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	9493	20	17	35	901	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	71	26	0	0	116